

Watercooler talk

Did you hear that . . .

. . . consultants now calculate the cost for discovering, developing, and launching a single new drug, factoring in failed attempts, at nearly \$1.7 billion?

. . . prominent scientists and industry leaders believe researchers no longer have the luxury of focusing on their own little corners of the biological universe?

. . . the drug industry had 64 products each with over \$1 billion in sales in 2003, 23 of which had individual sales over \$2 billion?

. . . only 14 potential blockbusters remain in the drug industry's pipeline to 2008?

. . . some believe recent technological revolutions have failed to lead to equivalent revolutions in drug discovery?

. . . a biopharmaceutical executive believes RNA in the 21st century will equal what proteins have previously offered as opportunities for drug R&D?

. . . things may look bad now, but given what's coming, we probably only know 1% of the information that we'll know in five years?

. . . the global drug industry's sales grew 9% in 2003 to \$466.3 billion, but consultants believe growth will slow unless drug companies soon make major changes?

. . . only two drugs have been approved for the disease, but the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has 23 more in clinical trials and \$100 million to help fund biopharmaceutical company R&D?

. . . cholesterol reducers have become the biggest drug category, edging out antiulcerants for the first time in more than 14 years?

. . . the FDA sees a "growing crisis," believing that product development is not keeping pace with basic science innovation?

. . . Wisconsin got nearly \$375 million from the National Institutes of Health in 2003 while the state government put \$40 million toward nurturing the local biotech industry and created a \$300 million fund for seed and early-stage capital?

. . . Roche's AmpliChip pharmacogenomics microarray may be an important learning case for the FDA as the agency attempts to fit this technology into regulations?

. . . first-generation biotech companies succeeded because they focused on developing products in totally different ways from what pharmaceutical firms had been doing?

. . . zebrafish embryos and larvae are small enough to be raised in only 100 μ L of water in the wells of a 96-well plate for high-throughput whole-animal assays?

. . . lipomic profiling is a powerful tool for drug discovery given that many prevalent health conditions in the industrialized world involve changes in lipid metabolism?

. . . the FDA intends to create a "critical path opportunities list," prioritizing drug development problems and identifying areas for quick improvement?

. . . even if the market for targeted therapies is slow to take off, consultants believe companies learning to make such medicines could triple their shareholder value by 2010?

. . . to succeed, next-generation companies will have to not only develop better drugs, but also develop drugs better?

And, did you know that stories offering these and other insights appear in this month's issue of *Modern Drug Discovery*?

If your company or laboratory supplies the community watercooler, coffee machine, or microwave popcorn, *MDD* will help provide the conversation.

